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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 06/07/07

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ARTICLES:

(1) Shigeru Ishiba, LDP Constitution Deliberation Commission chief secretary, interviewed on collective self-defense

SIPDIS

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
June 6, 2007

-- The Liberal Democratic Party has established a select commission to study the right to use collective self-defense.

Ishiba: Prime Minister Abe has launched a blue-ribbon panel to study four scenarios, such as a response to a missile headed for the United States. The party will consider what the right to collective self-defense is rather than examine specific cases. The axis of Japan-US relations is the bilateral security treaty, which obligates the United States to defend Japan and Japan to offer bases to the United States in return. That's because Japan is not allowed to exercise the right to use collective self-defense. Japan thus is not on equal footing with the United States. I would like to see the select commission discuss even the question of whether Japan-US relations should be left as is.

-- Are you aiming to make the Japan-US relationship into an equal one by allowing Japan the right to exercise collective self-defense?

Ishiba: By allowing that, Japan can become America's true ally. Once Japan is allowed to use the right of collective self-defense, it no longer has to offer bases to the United States. Japan can tell the US armed forces here to leave, as they are no longer needed. That's what an independent country is. Lawmakers have never asked the people if Japan-US relations should be left as is. If the people want to leave things as is, that's fine, but I don't want to live in such a country.

-- Will altering the government's interpretation of the Constitution be enough to allow Japan the right to use collective self-defense?

Ishiba: That will not be enough. The government should allow the use

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of the right in light of the UN Charter, establish a basic security law spelling out criteria on use of the right, and revise the Self-Defense Forces Law in a way that would allow Japan to intercept selective targets, such as a missile fired toward the United States. We also need an individual-defense right law to deal with armed attacks.

-- Agriculture Minister Toshikatsu Matsuoka's suicide and the pension debacle have dealt blows to the administration. Do you think they will take a toll on the study of the collective self-defense right as well?

Ishiba: These are two separate matters. I think the outcome of the Upper House election could affect the speed of the discussion. If the prime minister wants to address such big issues as constitutional revision and collective defense, he must first properly respond to such everyday issues as political funds and pension and win the public's trust.

-- Does that mean results require careful discussion?

Ishiba: Yes. The revision of the US-Japan Security Treaty destroyed the Kishi cabinet. The public reacted more furiously to his high-handed approach rather than to the revision itself. I don't want to see Prime Minister Abe follow in Mr. Kishi's footsteps. Some Asian countries are still extremely alarmed at Japan. He will definitely fail if he pursues collective self-defense without properly reflecting on the prewar era.

(2) Interview with Tetsuo Saito, chairman of New Komeito Policy Research Council, on the right to collective defense

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
June 7, 2007

-- The New Komeito's position is that the country is not allowed to exercise the right to collective defense.

Saito: It took Japan 60 years to earn international credibility as a peace-oriented country. Behind that lies Article 9 of the Constitution. It would be suicidal for the government to change its interpretation of Article 9. From the viewpoint that the Constitution is a set of rules allowing the public to restrain government power, we cannot allow the administration to change the traditional interpretation. Altering the interpretation won't benefit Japan in any way.

-- A blue-ribbon panel launched by Prime Minister Abe has been set in motion.

Saito: The prime minister has not told the panel to conduct discussions to open the door to collective defense. The four scenarios presented by the prime minister can be dealt with sufficiently by exercising the individual right to self-defense or the natural right instead of the collective defense right. As for missile defense, it is meaningless to discuss what is technically impossible at this point.

-- What if the prime minister takes a step toward changing the interpretation?

Saito: We will oppose it. There are some things about which we cannot argue with our coalition partner, but the right to collective

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defense is not one of them.

-- Are you saying that the New Komeito might leave the coalition?

Saito: The matter concerns the foundation of the coalition. We cannot do things with (the Liberal Democratic Party) that will not benefit Japan in the long run. The prime minister clearly told New Komeito Representative Ota that he would respect the traditional constitutional interpretation, and we take it seriously.

-- The prime minister might put forward the questions of constitutional revision and the right to collective defense. Won't such a development affect campaign cooperation for the upcoming Upper House election?

Saito: Those themes will make clear the presence of the New Komeito. Supporters have often told us to defend Article 9 and send out a message that the party will not allow the country to exercise the right to collective defense. Even if the New Komeito headquarters plans to support the LDP on the back of the prime minister's insistence, some supporters might say they don't share that view.

-- As a coalition partner, do you have any requests about how to proceed with the debate?

Saito: The Kantei's (Prime Minister's Official Residence) go-it-alone mentality has been exposed not only through the collective-defense debate but also through other key bills. They are all big themes, so we want the Kantei to have some flexibility to align with the ruling parties.

(3) Tetsushi Sakamoto to run in Lower House by-election to fill Kumamoto No. 3 district seat held by former Agriculture Minister Matsuoka

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
June 7, 2007

In order to fill a House of Representatives seat that fell vacant after Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Toshikatsu Matsuoka committed suicide, a by-election for the Kumamoto No. 3 district will be conducted the same day with the House of Councillors election. Former Lower House member Tetsushi Sakamoto, 56, announced yesterday his intention to run in the by-election. He used to be a Kumamoto prefectural assembly member belonging to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). However, he said: "At present I have no intention of asking the LDP to endorse or recommend me."

Sakamoto was first elected to the Lower House as an independent in the 2003 election, defeating Matsuoka, who was endorsed by the LDP. He was, however, defeated by Matsuoka in the 2005 Lower House election by a margin of about 8,000 votes.

(4) Global warming gases: Japanese company expected to obtain emissions rights in ODA project

SANKEI (Top Play) (Full)
June 6, 2007

It was learned on June 5 that a wind power plant under construction along the coast of the Red Sea in Egypt financed with Japan's official development assistance (ODA) was recognized as a clean development mechanism (CDM) project, awarding emissions rights to

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Japan for the first time among ODA projects. The government intends to use CDM projects in ODA in a strategic manner, following this case.

The project eligible for the application of the CDM is a wind power plant project in Zafarana 220 kilometers southeast of Cairo. Japan signed a yen loan contract to extend up to 13.497 billion yen. The project will likely be formally recognized as a CDM project at a CDM board meeting under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The Marrakech agreement signed in Jan. 2001, which stipulates the concrete application of the Kyoto Protocol, noted that ODA projects couldn't be regarded as CDM projects. That is because developing countries, such as India and China, opposed the idea, noting that if such a system is approved, industrialized countries would concentrate on CDM projects with the aim of obtaining emissions rights, preventing funds from being used for other projects, such as the consolidation of social infrastructure.

However, the Japanese government and the JBIC had then begun to call for the use of ODA for CDM projects. The Development Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in April 2004 approved the use of ODA for CDM projects, attaching a condition that emissions rights should be given not directly to the ODA-sponsor countries but to private companies of those countries. Amid growing competition to obtain emissions rights expected to occur throughout the world, developing countries have begun to focus on the advantage of development in exchange for the sales of emissions rights, contributing to the outcome this time.

The government is looking into the feasibility of establishing a new long-term fund mechanism on a considerable scale as a global warming measure for developing countries as part of a national strategy to deal with the global warming issue. The use of ODA is now regarded as a viable means. New ODA projects in China will end in fiscal 2008. However, given the fact that 3.3 trillion yen worth of ODA projects carried out since 2000 have included many projects for global warming preventive measures, the government intends to obtain emissions rights in the future from China through CDM projects.

(5) JBIC, leading Japanese banks to make major investment in southern Africa for construction of ports, harbors, social infrastructure: Resources development to be backed

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 1) (Full)
June 6, 2007 Evening

The Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and Japan's leading private-sector banks have decided to make major investment in the southern African region, including the Republic of South Africa. The envisaged investment is aimed for the construction of social infrastructure, such as an electric power supply system, ports and harbors. The aim is to assist production and resources development operations by Japanese companies operating in that region. Another aim is to highlight Japan's assistance to Africa coinciding with the G-8 summit (Heiligendamm Summit), whose agenda items include measures to help Africa reconstruct itself, as well as to bring about a rollback against China, whose has made marked

advance into Africa in recent years.

The JBIC will today sign a contract for loans worth 24 billion yen to be extended to Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) jointly

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with a group consisting of four private banks, including Mizuho Corporate Bank, with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation as managing bank.

The DBSA is a regional bank financed by the Republic of South Africa. It supplies funds for the modernization of ports and harbors in Cape Town and Durban in the southern part of the country, and the modernization of roads, railway systems and communications facilities in urban areas. Toyota Motors is operating in that nation, enjoying the number-one place in the sales of autos there. Durban is a base for auto exports bound for Europe and the Middle East. However, the consolidation of ports and harbors there still lags.

Another group of four banks with Bank of Mitsubishi-Tokyo UFJ as managing bank will sign a contract to extend loans worth 17 billion yen to South African Electricity Supply Company (ESKOM).

China in May held an annual plenary meeting of the African Development Bank, an international development bank, in Shanghai. It is deepening relations with African countries by supplying low-interest-rate funds to African nations. European countries, such as Britain, are strengthening relations with them, based on their historical connections. US companies are also advancing into Africa with for its resources. The Japanese government has begun moving to strengthen relations with Africa.

(6) Poll on Abe cabinet, political parties, upper house election, Matsuoka suicide, constitutional reform, pension fiasco

SANKEI (Page 6) (Full)
June 6, 2007

Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage, rounded off.)

Q: Do you support the Abe cabinet?

Yes	32.3(39.9)
No	49.2(35.4)
Don't know (D/K) + Can't say which (CSW)	18.6(24.7)

Q: Which political party do you support?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)	29.7(30.3)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto)	17.1(13.3)
New Komeito (NK)	4.0(4.7)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP)	3.0(2.5)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto)	1.7(1.9)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto)	0.2(0.1)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon)	0(0.1)
New Party Daichi (NPD or Shinto Daichi)	0.2(0)
Other answers (O/A)	1.0(1.1)
None	40.7(42.4)
D/K + Can't say (C/S)	2.8(3.7)

Q: Do you appreciate Prime Minister Abe and his cabinet on those listed below?

His personal character	
Yes	61.3(65.8)
No	24.3(17.8)
D/K+CSW	14.5(16.5)

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Foreign policy
Yes 30.2(27.2)

No 46.2(46.3)
D/K+CSW 23.7(26.6)

Educational reform
Yes 27.8(24.2)
No 49.0(49.5)
D/K+CSW 23.3(26.4)

His leadership
Yes 15.4(15.8)
No 67.7(63.2)
D/K+CSW 16.9(21.1)

Economic policy
Yes 17.6(17.7)
No 57.6(51.1)
D/K+CSW 24.9(31.3)

Civil service reform
Yes 25.5
No 49.0
D/K+CSW 25.6

Response to lost pension records
Yes 17.3
No 68.6
D/K+CSW 14.2

Response to Agriculture-Forestry-Fisheries Minister Matsuoka's
suicide
Yes 10.5
No 68.2
D/K+CSW 21.4

Approach to constitutional revision
Yes 32.5
No 44.4
D/K+CSW 23.2

Policy priority
Yes 18.0(19.5)
No 45.2(39.8)
D/K+CSW 36.9(40.7)

Q: How long do you think the Abe cabinet will continue?

Until this summer's election for the House of Councillors
23.1(15.6)
Up to 3 years 60.2(65.6)
Beyond 3 years 12.4(11.5)
D/K+C/S 4.4(7.5)

Q: Are you interested in this summer's election for the House of
Councillors?

Yes 74.6(68.5)
No 21.9(26.4)
D/K+C/S 3.6(5.2)

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Q: Which side between the ruling and opposition camps would you like
to see gaining more seats in the House of Councillors as a result of
its election scheduled for this summer?

LDP-led ruling camp 31.9(35.0)
DPJ-led opposition camp 51.7(47.2)
D/K+CSW 16.5(17.9)

Q: What do you think will be a major issue in campaigning for the
upcoming House of Councillors election?

Educational reform 7.1
Economic disparity 18.2
Pension 39.0

Tax reform 4.8
Civil service reform 2.1
Politics and money 6.1
Low birthrate 3.4
Foreign, security policies 2.8
Constitutional revision 9.4
D/K+C/S 7.4

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Councillors, which side's candidate would you like to vote for in your electoral district?

Ruling-affiliated candidate 34.0
Opposition-affiliated candidate 43.8
D/K+C/S 22.3

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Councillors, which political party would you like to vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 28.8
DPJ 30.3
NK 4.7
JCP 4.0
SDP 2.2
PNP 0.7
NPN 0.2
Other political parties 4.2
D/K+C/S 25.2

Q: Will you go to the polls for the House of Councillors election?

Think of voting on election day 82.2
Think of voting before election day 8.4
Don't think of going to the polls 5.6
D/K+C/S 3.9

Q: Do you think the problem over former Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Matsuoka will affect the House of Councillors election?

Yes 70.0
No 22.3
D/K+CSW 7.8

Q: Do you think Prime Minister Abe should shuffle his cabinet in response to the suicide of former Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Matsuoka and other problems?

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Yes 34.4
No 45.5
D/K+CSW 20.2

Q: What do you think about the suicide of former Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Matsuoka?

He should have fulfilled his duties as state minister 15.4
He should have resigned as state minister 46.1
Prime Minister Abe should have dismissed him 34.3
D/K+C/S 4.3

Q: The National Referendum Law has been enacted. Would you like the Constitution to be amended?

Yes 44.3
No 31.7
D/K+CSW 24.1

Q: Would you like Constitution Article 9 to be amended?

Yes 37.6
No 41.9
D/K+CSW 20.6

Q: Do you trust the current pension system?

Yes 11.8
No 80.2
D/K+CSW 8.1

Q: What do you think about the Diet debate over pensions?

Hurry to enact a government-introduced package of legislative measures related to the Social Insurance Agency's reform

28.2
Continue discussions on the pension system as asserted by the opposition parties 58.0
D/K+C/S 13.9

Q: Do you support the idea of allowing taxpayers to pay a portion of their taxes to their hometowns?

Yes 47.6
No 28.0
D/K+CSW 24.5

Q: Do you think you are a floating voter with no particular party affiliation?

Yes 56.4(59.4)
No 35.9(33.3)
D/K+CSW 7.8(7.4)

(Note) Parentheses denote the results of a previous survey conducted in April.

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted June 2-3 by the Sankei Shimbun and Fuji News Network (FNN) over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. For the survey, a total of 2,000 persons were sampled from among males and females, aged 20 and over, across the nation. The total percentage of answers to each question does not become 100 percent due to rounding.

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(7) Poll on Abe cabinet, political parties, Matsuoka suicide, pension system

TOKYO (Page 2) (Full)
March 13, 2007

Questions & Answers

(Figures shown in percentage. Parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted May 12-13.)

Q: Do you support the Abe cabinet?

Yes 35.8(47.6)
No 48.7(38.2)
Don't know (D/K) + no answer (N/A) 15.5(14.2)

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the previous question)
What's the primary reason for your approval of the Abe cabinet? Pick only one from among those listed below.

The prime minister is trustworthy 21.2(23.1)
Because it's a coalition cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 9.4(7.2)
The prime minister has leadership ability 3.3(3.0)
Something can be expected of its economic policies 1.6(0.9)
Something can be expected of its foreign policies 4.4(9.9)
Something can be expected of its political reforms 6.5(7.1)
Something can be expected of its tax reforms 1.4(1.5)
Something can be expected of its administrative reforms 2.3(4.3)
There's no other appropriate person (for prime minister) 49.1(40.6)
Other answers (O/A) 0.3(0.1)
D/K+N/A 0.5(2.3)

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the first question) What's the primary reason for your disapproval of the Abe cabinet? Pick only one from among those listed below.

The prime minister is untrustworthy 11.6(11.8)
Because it's a coalition cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 8.3(6.6)
The prime minister lacks leadership ability 31.4(19.2)
Nothing can be expected of its economic policies 12.7(18.3)
Nothing can be expected of its foreign policies 3.6(4.8)
Nothing can be expected of its political reforms 8.4(11.3)
Nothing can be expected of its tax reforms 7.0(6.1)
Nothing can be expected of its administrative reforms 7.0(8.0)
Don't like the prime minister's personal character 3.7(9.6)
O/A 4.4(2.5)
D/K+N/A 1.9(1.8)

Q: Which political party do you support?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 31.5(36.3)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 22.2(18.8)
New Komeito (NK) 5.0(3.4)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 3.1(2.8)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.3(2.3)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.6(0.1)

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New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.5(---)
Other political parties, groups ---(---)
None 35.5(35.1)
D/K+N/A 0.3(1.2)

Q: Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Toshikatsu Matsuoka, who had been pursued over his political funds and other issues, committed suicide. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe consistently defended him. Do you think Prime Minister Abe has fulfilled his accountability as the one who appointed Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Matsuoka?

Yes 19.9
No 69.5
D/K+N/A 10.6

Q: Do you appreciate Prime Minister Abe's efforts to grapple with the issue of politics and money?

Yes 17.0
No 71.8
D/K+N/A 11.2

Q: A bill to revise the Political Funds Control Law for the clarity of political funds is now before the Diet. The legislation requires lawmakers to report their office spending and other outlays with receipts for the clarity of political funds. Do you think the law should be revised in the current Diet session?

Yes 73.2
No 18.7
D/K+N/A 8.1

Q: Do you think the death of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Matsuoka will affect Prime Minister Abe's political steering and the outcome of this summer's election for the House of Councillors?

Yes 72.3
No 23.4
D/K+N/A 4.3

Q: The House of Representatives approved two bills and sent them to the House of Councillors. One of the two bills is to scrap the time limit for pensioners to retroactively claim benefits they were not paid as a result of the Social Insurance Agency's record-keeping blunders. The other bill is to reform the Social Insurance Agency.

Do you appreciate this as a positive move to reform the nation's pension system?

Yes	38.6
No	52.5
D/K+N/A	8.9

Q: Would you like the current LDP-led coalition government to stay on, or would you otherwise like it to be replaced with a DPJ-led one?

LDP-led coalition government	35.7(41.6)
DPJ-led coalition government	36.6(31.9)
D/K+N/A	27.7(26.5)

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Councillors,

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which political party or which political party's candidate would you like to vote for?

LDP	26.5
DPJ	28.8
NK	5.2
JCP	3.0
SDP	1.8
PNP	0.9
NPN	---
Other political parties, groups	0.1
Independent candidate	11.5
Won't go to the polls	2.2
D/K+N/A	20.0

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted June 1-2 by Kyodo News Service on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Among randomly generated telephone numbers, those actually for household use with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,486. Answers were obtained from 1,040 persons.

SCHIEFFER